Leader Challenge

One way to think about leader development for our future platoon leaders is in terms of the most challenging experiences that we know they are going to have—and then to design resources that bring to bear the experience of leaders who are in those experiences right now.

The Leader Challenge does that through an interactive, video-based vignette that features a dilemma-type scenario that an actual platoon leader has experienced.

This process has the potential to shift the

Leader Challenge Basic Concept

(1) Watch the "Leader Challenge" video.

(2) Respond in writing: What are your considerations? What would you do?

(3) Read & comment on other members' responses

(4) Watch the "Rest of the Story" video / access additional resources

1. Watch the “leader challenge” video

1 **Watch the Challenge:**

Additional resources: #1

4 **Watch the Rest of the Story:**

Complete Steps 2 and 3 below in order to Watch the Rest of the Story

2 **Respond: What are your considerations...What would you do?**

Please submit your response here...

Submit 500

3 **Read & Comment on member responses (and Identify the most helpful ones)**

Complete Step 2 above (submit your response) in order to read all the other responses. **[411 responses]**

2. Respond: What would you do?

1 Watch the Challenge:

Additional resources: #1

4 Watch the Rest of the Story:

Complete Steps 2 and 3 below in order to Watch the Rest of the Story

2 Respond: What are your considerations...What would you do?

The first thing that comes to mind to me is to clarify with the commander what my situation is -- to paint the picture about the state of my soldiers (ammo, water, etc). I'd also want to know...

Submit 305

3 Read & Comment on member responses (and Identify the most helpful ones)

Complete Step 2 above (submit your response) in order to read all the other responses. **[411 responses]**

3. Read and comment on members' responses

"Ethical Leadership" Example Responses

• I personally would call up to higher and request that my platoon not be tasked to do the mission. In my view, not only are the soldiers at risk after being out for 13 hours straight, being black on water and food, and (most importantly) seeing one of their fellow soldiers get killed, but civilians on the target are as well. I think that there is potential that some soldiers in the platoon would take out their frustration on civilians on the target.

• At this point, this is the most critical time for the platoon to gain cohesion and sense of purpose. Though the day has been long, situations tough, and morale low the crux of this mission will be completion. If the platoon continues without completing the mission, it will be as if the Soldier's injury was for naught. I'd talk with the PSG, continue this mission, and give the guys a long rest/break afterwards.

• I would advise my company commander on the status and condition of the platoon...request another force be tasked to clear OBJ...that we would provide over watch of OBJ until element could get to the OBJ. If Commander does not agree...request emergency water resupply, explain situation to the men and continue the mission.

• First thing I would do is talk to my CO and let him know the situation--soldiers heartbroken/in shock, PSG says the troops can't do the clearing mission. My concerns would be sustainment (water, food), safety (are their heads in the game?) and treatment of locals (anger, payback). I'd ask the CO to reconsider. If

3. Read and comment on members'

by James P on Fri, Sep 18, 10:29 AM **Helpful?** Undo **(10) people found this helpful**

As a leaders you have dual responsibility to both your Soldiers and your Command and you have to be faithful to both. If you are ordered to go clear the buildings then your responsibility is clear. You are just going to earn your pay today. Explain to your men you are going to go kill the trigger man. Channel they energy into constructive effort. Then ensure that your command fully understands your disposition (that you will need resupply) that the command understads the size of the OBJ.

Add a comment

5 Comments

by Daniel F on Sun, Sep 27, 7:59 PM

i agree.

Edit Delete

by Thomas S on Wed, Sep 23, 7:51 AM

I agree and like the dual responsibility comment. I support your inclination toward completing the mission--if your water will hold out. Getting your PSG and NCOs on board is a critical leadership task at this point and having a good relationship with them prior to the incident will make this easier. Your subordinates must understand that you will not always agree, but that YOU have to make a decision, and for the good of the unit, they need to support once that decision is made.

Edit Delete

by Talon Y on Fri, Sep 18, 10:42 AM

Well said.

Edit Delete

by Erica L on Fri, Sep 18, 10:41 AM

I agree their is a dual responsibility to Soldiers and Command. However, we never should automatically go put Soldiers in harms way, given their taxation at the time, without proper assessment. If the clearance is not immediately time sensitive (given clarification from the command), then ask for relief or a period of time to regroup: don't just take them straight in.

Edit Delete

by Megan W on Fri, Sep 18, 10:41 AM

I agree with directing the Soldiers to become proactive with constructive energy. However, I want to emphasize that we get the right guy. I would not want their frustrations and emotions to take away their ability to assess and analyze the target before engaging.

Edit Delete

4. Watch the “rest of the story” video

1 **Watch the Challenge:**

Additional resources: #1

4 **Watch the Rest of the Story:**

Additional resources: #1 #2 #3 #4 #5

2 **Respond: What are your considerations...What would you do?**

Thanks for responding to this Leader Challenge. Your response is posted below.

3 **Read & Comment on member responses (and Identify the most helpful ones)**

Most Recent | **Most Helpful** | Most Comments

F2F Leader Challenge Workshop

(1) Take the online leader challenge

(2) Meet and discuss in small groups with mentor

Leader Challenge Workshop (Cadet dback)

This experience was very valuable because it has validated what I have learned throughout my career at West Point and has given me more confidence in my decision-making ability. I feel I know what I need to do now to become a good platoon leader."

"I truly think that these classes have been as valuable, if not more, than any other experience I've had at West Point."

"This was great because it was relevant and applicable OPD…finally. This was the first time in a PME session where I was actually treated like an officer and incorporated into the lesson/had some input into where the discussion went. I came out of these meetings genuinely thinking about what I'd have done long after I left."

"This was the most real-life developmental experience I have had

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Conversation
Connection

A living curriculum, grounded in the ongoing experiences of current leaders

Professional Forums

Leaders connecting in conversation …

…becoming more effective.